

BUT WOULD A SUNSET HELP THE ENEMY OR
HAMSTRING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH?

At a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing last March, an administration witness surprisingly did not support the inclusion of sunsets in AUMFs because “we do not want to say to our adversaries at some date if they just hold out they can do whatever they please.” The Biden administration should shift that position—and embrace Reps. Lee and Meijer’s amendment—for at least three reasons.

First, there’s simply no reason to believe a congressional reauthorization requirement, or sunset, would send such a signal to an adversary. It is doubtful that adversaries in foreign countries—often primarily engaged against non-U.S. enemies—are at all concerned with U.S. domestic law authorizations. But even if we were to try to glean external signals from a domestic reauthorization requirement, as former State Department Legal Adviser Harold Hongju Koh said in 2015, “a sunset is not a repeal; it need not even be read as a proposal to repeal in the future. . . . A sunset is simply a shared congressional-executive agreement to reassess the situation together as a nation.”

If anything, a reauthorization requirement shows that Congress is paying attention to the war it has authorized and will continue to do so. And notwithstanding legitimate concerns of partisan Capitol Hill gridlock, Congress manages to pass NDAA’s, budgets, and other high-stakes legislation when needed.

Second, U.S. political leaders and the national security institutions that support them make decisions about the scale of U.S. involvement within and outside of conflict zones based on a range of factors, including the severity and immediacy of the threat, resource constraints, and the willingness and reliability of partners on the ground to act. A brief look at the past three presidential administrations underscores this point: it was not the expiration of an AUMF that caused President Biden to withdraw U.S. forces from Afghanistan, Trump to announce withdrawal from Syria (before reversing course), or Obama to withdraw from President George W. Bush’s war in Iraq.

It bears emphasizing here that in any true emergency situation, under threat of an imminent armed attack or in a situation where U.S. nationals are in imminent peril abroad, the president may rely on independent authority in Art. II of the Constitution to act quickly (as most presidents in our recent history have done), regardless of the existence of any congressional authorization.

Third, and arguably far more important than any potential signal that might be sent to a foreign adversary, a reauthorization requirement sends a very real and important signal to our own troops: Congress supports the war effort you are engaged in and has taken a tough vote to authorize it. And if you are brave enough to fight, we are brave enough to vote.

A reauthorization requirement also signals—both internally and externally—a commitment to our own democratic processes. That commitment is now more important than ever for members of Congress and the executive branch to embrace.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. “BOBBY” SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 13, 2022

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to several provisions included in this year’s National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Reauthorization, although ultimately, I will vote in favor for final passage of the bill.

First, I oppose Amendment 640, considered on the floor as part of en bloc Amendment 5, which directs the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to reclassify public safety telecommunications officers, also called 911 dispatchers, as a protective service occupation in the U.S. Government’s Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. This Amendment would have no direct effect on these workers’ wages, benefits, or other resources; proponents of this reclassification have stated that it “would provide validation.”

The SOC classification system is a federal statistical standard used across agencies in data collection. According to OMB, “[t]he SOC is designed exclusively for statistical purposes.” Changes to the codes affect multiple data sources frequently used by policymakers, researchers, and employers, including the American Community Survey, the nation’s largest household survey; the Current Population Survey (CPS), the key source of our monthly employment numbers; and the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES), the authoritative source of employment and wage information by occupation. These changes would undermine the intent and legitimacy of the SOC by deviating from the long-established process designed to ensure the objectivity and integrity statistical data classifications more broadly.

A standing committee at OMB, the SOC Policy Committee (SOCPC), is responsible for maintaining the accuracy of these codes using well-defined principles. The SOCPC undertakes a routine revision of the codes roughly once per decade; the process spans multiple years and “involves extensive background research, periods or public comment, review of comments, and implementation of revisions.” During its latest revision, which began in early 2012 and was finalized in 2018, OMB specifically rejected comments requesting it reclassify 911 dispatchers as directed in Amendment 640. In response to public comments presented in the May 2014 Federal Register, the Obama Administration’s OMB explained it “did not accept these recommendations based on Classification Principle 2, which states that workers are coded according to the work performed. The work performed is that of a dispatcher, not a first responder.”

In 2016, OMB declined a similar request for reclassification. Based on the principles OMB’s policy committee applies to determine SOC codes, 911 telephone dispatchers are already properly and accurately classified. This point was reiterated in communications with the Education and Labor Committee in 2021, explaining, “After an extensive technical review of the requested reclassification for 911 dispatchers, OMB, consistent with the recommendation of the Chief Statistician of the

United States, decided not to make such an adjustment because it is inconsistent with the statistical purposes of the SOC.”

Furthermore, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), in a written communication with the Education and Labor Committee on September 15, 2021, reported that the change made by H.R. 1175, a bill identical to Amendment 640, “will introduce costly, unnecessary logistical and data interpretation delays and challenges affecting the quality of data.” Moreover, changes outside of the routine revision process would undermine the goal of data continuity, limiting data sources’ usefulness for their key purpose of statistical analysis; create precedent for disrupting the standard SOC revision process; and undermine the SOCPC’s authority as experts to apply the classification principles to determine what accuracy requires.

Public safety telecommunications officers perform critical, challenging work. They deserve our honor and gratitude for their efforts. However, considering the many alternative ways policymakers could confer “validation,” as the proponents are seeking, there is little policy justification for this Amendment’s approach to achieving that goal. Furthermore, the SOC is not intended to rank or group occupations by education, credentials, earnings, benefits, or any other user-defined indicator of status.

In conclusion, mandating a change to a statistical code would not affect these workers’ wages, benefits, or other resources—but it would disrupt data series continuity; require significant additional work for government agencies, researchers, employers, and others; and intervene in an official, routine government data-collection and statistical process.

Second, I oppose language in the bill, added by Amendment 113 considered on the floor as part of the en bloc Amendment 2, which would expand the Troops-to-Teachers program from recruiting veterans to become teachers, to recruiting veterans to fill a longer list of school-based positions including school resource officers (SROs). Increasing the presence of SROs can have a particularly harmful effect on students of color and students with disabilities. Nationally, Black and Latinx youth make up over 58 percent of school-based arrests while representing only 40 percent of public school enrollment, and Black students are more than twice as likely to be referred to law enforcement or arrested at school as their white peers. According to a 2018 study by GAO, Black students, boys, and students with disabilities are also disproportionately disciplined in K–12 public schools.

Moreover, the amendment removes crucial language from the definition of “eligible school” which would target resources to high-poverty schools. This is concerning with regard to the recruitment of key positions such as teachers, school leaders, and counselors to meet the needs of students in high-poverty schools, particularly as high-poverty schools have been disproportionately impacted by recent staffing shortages.

Finally, I oppose section 572 of the bill, added to NDAA during the full committee markup of the bill on June 23. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) plays a critical role in educating the children of our nation’s military families. Across the globe, DoDEA coordinates the education of more than 60,000 children. Importantly, the DoDEA

also stands apart from other public-school districts as one of only two federally operated K-12 school systems.

As a result, while it is within the federal government's purview to implement the proposed requirements for DoDEA schools under this legislation, these proposed requirements would be inappropriate to impose on traditional public school districts. This is a unique exception in our education system. Moving forward, Congress must continue to ensure that state and local governments can meet the unique needs of their students and parents without mandating requirements regarding the rights of parents.

While I support the overall passage of NDAA, I remain opposed to these three provisions.

HONORING THE CAREER OF JIM TATE HILL

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2022

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Jim Tate Hill, who dedicated his career to music, academics, and serving.

Jim Tate Hill started his career in 1970 when he decided to give his life to Christ. He began his training at St. Paul Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Bakersfield, California and continued his education. He attended college and received his Bachelor's degree in Music Education from the University of Pacific's Conservatory of Music. Jim's passion in music influenced his service to the community and through the church.

He served as the choir director at Glad Tidings COGIC and in 1981, Jim soon grew in different roles. He was the Lead Deacon, Sunday School Superintendent, Minister of Music, and Assistant Pastor at Bethel Temple COGIC. Under Jim's leadership as pastor of Bethel Temple, there were many issues that Jim felt needed to be addressed, such as youth and early education, homelessness, and community revitalization. With his California-license in general contracting, Jim has assisted in building and remodeling over 20 churches between Madera and Bakersfield.

In 2006, Jim was entrusted to be in the leading role as Superintendent of the Central Valley District. That same year, he was recognized by his contributions to education as one of the inaugural recipients of the African-American Heritage Award. During those 41 years, he worked under three District Superintendents as the Minister of Music, Sunday School Superintendent, and as the Assistant District Superintendent. In 2019, Bethel Temple opened Early Readers Preschool, a full preschool and daycare center, the only one of its kind located at a church in southwest Fresno.

Jim's character and work ethic elevated him to various roles throughout his life. He was recognized for his hard work and for creating impacts in the community. He was one of four inaugural recipients to receive the Excellence of Service medal by Bishop Samuel Doyle at the 43rd Annual Jurisdictional Holy Convocation in 2013. In 2020, Jim was elevated by Bishop Doyle to 2nd Admin. Assistant of the California Valley Jurisdiction and Chair of the Southern Region.

Jim has a B.A. in Music Education from the University of Pacific's Conservatory of Music. He has introduced both kindergarteners and high school students, to music ranging from classical to gospel for nearly 40 years in southwest Fresno. His high school and middle school choirs and bands have performed in California Music Educators Association festivals and competitions.

Jim has been happily married to Missionary Carla Hill for 45 years. Together, they have three children: Tate II, Paul, and Candice, and nine grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the career of Jim Tate Hill and may we continue to be inspired by his many contributions in the community.

CONGRATULATING CAPTAIN RICHARD RAMSAY ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE COLONA FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2022

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Captain Richard Ramsay who is retiring from the Colona Fire Department after 20 years of service.

Captain Ramsay joined the Colona Fire Department two decades ago with a passion for keeping his neighbors safe. He served many roles throughout his tenure with the department, including Firefighter, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Hazardous Material Technician, Safety Officer, and Special Teams Leader. His experience and reliability helped the department soar to new heights. He was a consummate professional with impeccable character, unafraid to tackle danger head on, no matter the circumstance. Captain Ramsay's impact on the Colona Fire Department and the surrounding Quad Cities region is unquestionable. I wish him and his family well as he transitions into this next chapter of life.

It is because of valiant and selfless leaders such as Captain Richard Ramsay that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to, again, formally congratulate Colona Fire Department Captain Richard Ramsay on his retirement and thank him for his 20 years of service to the Colona community.

RECOGNIZING ALL AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICALS IN MONTANA

HON. MATTHEW M. ROSENDALE, Sr.

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2022

Mr. ROSENDALE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the great American ingenuity coming out of Montana this month. All American Pharmaceuticals in Billings, Montana, have developed a new baby formula to provide relief from the shortage ravaging our nation.

Unfortunately, Biden's FDA gatekeepers are requiring them to jump through endless bureaucratic hoops to get mouths fed. The FDA licensed their company to manufacture—but not to sell.

If the Biden administration doesn't find long-term relief for our Nation's economic and supply chain issues, we are going to see more suffering Americans and more essential goods sitting in factories.

These Montanans are salt-of-the-earth, shirt-off-your-back people serving their neighbors. I commend All American Pharmaceuticals for their hard work, as well as all the nonprofits and charities in Montana supporting families and babies in crisis.

We need more innovators in Montana, and fewer gatekeepers in Washington.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH T. LETTELLEIR III

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2022

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of St. Petersburg legend, Joe Lettelieir, who was a giant in Pinellas County and left his indelible mark on everything he did whether a military veteran, business entrepreneur, respected banker, or prominent developer.

Joe moved to St. Petersburg in 1948 and attended Northeast High School where he met the love of his life, Becky. He attended Indiana University for college and served in the U.S. Army after graduation.

A man of many careers, he served as Senior Executive Vice President of Florida Federal Savings and Loan, Founder of Bay Development and Bayside Savings and Loan, and owner/operator of Paradise Lakes Resort. Most recently, Joe served as President and CEO of Contemporary Housing Alternatives of Florida (CHAF), a non-profit focused on providing affordable housing solutions in the region.

Joe was a well-known leader in St. Pete and proudly led countless boards and committees, including the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Shorecrest Preparatory School Board of Trustees, AMIKids, Quarterback Club, St. Pete Dragons, the St. Petersburg Housing Authority, and Concerned Citizens (STOP the Lens).

Through his advocacy efforts, especially on banking and housing issues, Joe befriended countless elected officials and public servants including my dear friend, the late Congressman C.W. Bill Young and Freddy St. Germain.

While the body of his professional and charitable work was a source of pride, Joe's most meaningful work is the beautiful family he created with his wonderful wife of 56 years, Becky. Joe and Becky have three loving children, Mark, Amy and Matt; and precious grandchildren, Ryan, Riley and Reece Lettelieir, and Megan and Jake Freedman to whom he was known as "Pa." He was a fixture at nearly every football, basketball, and baseball game, dance recital, cheerleading competition, and any opportunity to show his love and support for his children and grandchildren. He was also respected and cherished as a father figure to many of his children's friends, who always sought out his wisdom and guidance.

Joe, with Becky by his side, travelled the world, including all 50 states. Most visited during long road trips on America's backroads that he loved so much.